

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUCAR 02101 01 OF 02 301306Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUCHAREST 2101

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TAGES: PEPR OVIP (CEAUESCU, NICOLAE) RO SOPN
SUBJECT: CEAUESCU VISIT PREVIEW: HEARST INTERVIEWER
WALLACH'S REPORT ON MARCH 28 MEETING

REF: STATE 81717

1. SUMMARY. IN MARCH 30 DEBRIEFING ON FOUR-HOUR INTERVIEW
WITH CEAUESCU MARCH 28, HEARST DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT
JOHN WALLACH IDENTIFIED FOLLOWING HIGH POINTS:

--ON MIDDLE EAST, CEAUESCU FLOATED IDEA OF PRE-GENEVA
MEETING OF ALL PARTIES TO KEEP MOMENTUM OF SADAT VISIT GOING,
ENVISAGING U.S. AND ROMANIAN GOOD OFFICES, BUT DID NOT LINK
MEETING SPECIFICALLY TO UN;

--ON KOREA, CEAUESCU PRACTICALLY CONFIRMED HE WOULD BE
CARRYING MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT FROM KIM II-SUNG, AND SPOKE IN
TERMS OF PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF ISSUES BETWEEN TWO KOREAS,
INCLUDING CONFEDERATION, LEAVING EXISTING SOCIAL SYSTEMS IN-
TACT;

--ON CHINA, CEAUESCU MADE STRONG PITCH FOR U.S. TO MOVE
FORWARD TOWARD NORMALIZATION UNDETERRED BY SOVIET SUCCESSION
UNCERTAINTIES, AND OPINED CHANCES OF CHINESE ASSURANCES ON
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PAGE 02 BUCAR 02101 01 OF 02 301306Z

NON-USE OF FORCE RE TAIWAN WOULD BE MUCH IMPORVED IF U.S.
REFRAINS FROM LINKING REDUCTION OF U.S. PRESENCE AND "INTERNAL
CHINESE QUESTION;"

--ON HUMAN RIGHTS, CEAUESCU SAID HE WAS READY FOR DIS-
CUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT, AND DEPFONMIN GLIGA APPEARED RE-
CEPTIVE TO WALLACH'S SUGGESTION THAT CEAUESCU TAKE INITIATIVE

TO EXPLAIN SITUATION OF HUNGARIAN MINORITY.

--IN SOME OF TWO PLACES CEAUSESCU HIMSELF WENT OFF RECORD, HE SAID SOVIETS HAD BEEN BEHIND SPLIT OFF FRENCH LEFT AND PRE-ELECTORIAL DISSENSION BETWEEN SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS.

WALLACH ASKED THAT DEBRIEFING BE HEAVILY PROTECTED AT LEAST UNTIL HE FILES EARLY NEXT WEEK: ROMANIANS ARE SEEKING TO KEEP WRITTEN TRANSCRIPT SOLE ON-RECORD PORTION, BUT HE PLANS TO USE WHOLE INTERVIEW EXCEPT TWO INSTANCES SPECIFIED BY CEAUSESCU HIMSELF. END SUMMARY.

2. WALLACH SAID HE SPENT FOUR HOURS WITH CEAUSESCU MARCH 28, AND FOUND HIM RELAXED AND EXPANSIVE (HE HAD INTERVIEWED HIM TWICE IN PREVIOUS YEARS). IN CHANCE MARCH 29 POST-LUNCHEON ENCOUNTER, DEPFONMIN GLIGA TOLD DCM CEAUSESCU HAD BEEN IN GOOD MOOD AFTER INTERVIEW TOO. AFTER SOME HASSLE WITH AGERPRESS, WALLACH WAS PERMITTED TO TAPE ENTIRE CONVERSATION, AS WELL AS TAKE NOTES, AND AFTER HE INTERRUPTED CEAUSESCU'S INITIAL APPROACH OF READING FROM WRITTEN ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS, TALK WAS FREE-FROM. ALTHOUGH AGERPRESS CURRENTLY TRYING TO CONVINCE HIM ONLY WRITTEN TRANSCRIPT IS ON RECORD, WALLACH PLANS TO USE WHEN HE RETURNS TO THE U.S. WHOLE INTERVIEW EXCEPT TO INSTANCES WHERE CEAUSESCU HIMSELF WENT OFF RECORD AND TO LEAD WITH KOREA AND CHINA POINTS. HE ASKED THAT OUR RECORD OF TALK BE HEAVILY PROTECTED FROM OTHER JOURNALISTS UNTIL CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BUCAR 02101 01 OF 02 301306Z

HE USES IT, WHICH WILL NOT BE BEFORE EARLY NEXT WEEK.

3. CEAUSESCU HAD SPENT GOOD DEAL OF TIME ON MIDDLE EAST, WITH STRESS ON NEED TO FIND WAYS OF KEEPING PROCESS BEGUN BY SADAT INITIATIVE MOVING FORWARD, AND ON SUGGESTION THAT U.S. AND ROMANIA USE GOOD OFFICES TO BRING ABOUT MEETING WHERE ALL DIRECTLY INTERESTED PARTIES COULD TAKE PART. HE DID NOT ENVISAGE THIS AS ALTERNATIVE TO DIRECT EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI TALKS, BUT AS COMPLEMENT, A SORT OF ENCOURAGING FRAMEWORK. STRESSING IMPORTANCE OF HAVING ALL DIRECTLY INTERESTED PARTIES INVOLVED, INCLUDING SOVIETS, CEAUSESCU MENTIONED BOTH "PALESTINIANS" AND "PLO," BUT NOT UN. COMMENT. THIS MAY BE PUBLIC VERSION OF "WALDHEIM INITIATIVE" FLOATED DURING PUNGAN'S VISIT TO NEW YORK IN FEBRUARY, BUT, AT LEAST FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION, WITHOUT WALDHEIM HIMSELF. END COMMENT.

4. ON KOREA, CEAUSESCU SAID WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS FROM SOUTH WOULD BE "IMPORTANT FACTOR" CREATING CONDITIONS FOR PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF ISSUES BETWEEN TWO KOREAN SIDES, INCLUDING REUNIFICATION, WHICH WOULD LEAVE "EXISTING SOCIAL SYSTEMS" IN PLACE. WHEN WALLACH ASKED HIM POINT-BLANK WHETHER HE IS CARRYING MESSAGE FROM KIM II-SUNG TO PRESIDENT CARTER, HE REPLIED

TO EFFECT THAT IF U.S. IS REALLY DETERMINED TO HELP MOVE KOREA ISSUES IN DIRECTION OF PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT, THIS COULD BE THE CASE. SINCE WALLACH CONSIDERS POINT ON MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING SOCIAL SYSTEMS--WHICH WAS STATED WITHOUT TIME DEADLINES--MOST NOVEL FEATURE OF INTERVIEW, HE PLANS TO LEAD WITH IT IN HIS PUBLIC REPORTING. HIS IMPRESSION OF NOVELTY WAS REINFORCED BY CEAUSESCU REPLIES TO HIS QUESTIONS ON WHAT SORT OF "DEMOCRATIZATION" IS REQUIRED IN SOUTH, WHICH WERE VERY MILD (AS WALLACH SAW IT) AND DID NOT GO MUCH IF AT ALL BEYOND EXIT OF PARK.

5. ON CHINA, CEAUSESCU MADE VERY STRONG PITCH FOR U.S. INITIATIVES TO MOVE SINO-U.S. RELATIONS TOWARD FULL NORMALIZATION. NEW CHINESE LEADERSHIP WITH ITS PRAGMATIC APPROACH IS READY FOR
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PAGE 04 BUCCHAR 02101 01 OF 02 301306Z

SUCH INITIATIVES, HE ASSURED WALLACH. WHEN WALLACH OBJECTED THAT U.S. HAS CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS COMING UP THIS YEAR AND THAT INCIPIENT SOVIET SUCCESSION UNCERTAINTIES MADE MOVEMENT IN SINO-US RELATIONS PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE, CEAUSESCU BRUSHED THESE OBJECTIONS ASIDE, SAYING THEY SHOULD NOT EVEN BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. WHEN WALLACH IDENTIFIED ASSURANCES CONCERNING USE OF FORCE VIV-A-VIS TAIWAN AS CORE ISSUE FOR FORWARD MOVEMENT, CEAUSESCU SAID CAREFULLY HE THOUGH THAT IF ISSUES INVOLVED IN REDUCTION OF U.S. PRESENCE ON TAIWAN WERE NOT FORMALLY LINKED WITH WHAT CHINESE REGARD AS INTERNAL CHINESE QUESTION, ASSURANCES CONCERNING USE OF FORCE WOULD BE MUCH EASIER TO

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PAGE 01 BUCCHAR 02101 02 OF 02 301228Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUCHAREST 2101
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OBTAIN. HE INSISTED THAT CHINESE LEADERSHIP HAS REPEATEDLY

DECLARED IT SEEKS PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF TAIWAN ISSUE (WALLACH WAS SKEPTICAL), AND NOTED THAT ROMANIA IS OF COURSE ALSO OPPOSED IN GENERAL TO USE OF FORCE.

6. WALLACH SAID CEAUSESCU TRIP TO CHINA AND NORTH KOREA IN MAY WAS "TOPIC OF DISCUSSION," ALTHOUGH CEAUSESCU DID NOT EXPLICITLY CONFIRM HE WAS GOING, AND WALLACH HAD STRONG IMPRESSION HE WOULD LIKE TO USE IT TO CARRY MESSAGE FROM AMERICANS TO CHINESE.

7. WALLACH SAID DISCUSSION OF OTHER INTERNATIONAL ISSUES WAS MORE ROUTINE. POINTS OF INTEREST:

--CEAUSESCU PREFACED REMARKS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA WITH COMMENT THAT ROMANIA HAD WELCOMED "DISCUSSION AMONG ALL PARTIES DIRECTED TOWARD PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT" IN RHODESIA, BUT BULK OF TALK WAS TOUGH CONDEMNATION OF "INTERNAL SETTLEMENT."

--CEAUSESCU REITERATED DISAPPOINTMENT WITH BELGRADE RESULTS AND COMMITMENT TO WORK HARD TO KEEP CSCE PROCESS GOING DESPITE THESE RESULTS.

--ON BALKANS, RECITAL OF EVENTS IN MULTILATERAL COOPERATION PROCESS BEGINNING WITH ATHENS MEETING WAS BLAND AND STANDARD EXCEPT FOR ONE POINT: ASKED WHETHER GOAL WAS A KIND OF BALKAN PACT, CEAUSESCU SAID THIS WAS NOT "AT FOREFRONT OF AGENDA," BUT DID NOT DISCLAIM IT FOR LONGER TERM.

8. ONE POINT WHICH WAS NOT ROUTINE WAS ONE OF TWO WHERE
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PAGE 02 BUCAR 02101 02 OF 02 301228Z

CEAUSESCU HIMSELF WENT OFF RECORD (WALLACH DID NOT IDENTIFY THE OTHER): SOVIETS, HE SAID, HAD BEEN BEHIND SPLIT IN FRENCH LEFT AND DISSENTION BETWEEN SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS WHICH HAD PRODUCED LAST ELECTION RESULT. WALLACH SAID CEAUSESCU WAS ALSO VERY FIRM ON EUROCOMMUNIST ISSUES IN GENERAL.

9. ON DOMESTIC AND BILATERAL ISSUES, WALLACH SAID FULL HOUR WAS DEVOTED TO HUMAN RIGHTS. CEAUSESCU SAID HE WAS READY FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES, SINCE IT WAS NOT HIS PRACTICE TO DUCK ISSUES, AND HE FINDS ROMANIAN RECORD IN SOME WAYS BETTER THAN AMERICAN. HUNGARIAN MINORITY TREATMENT CAME UP IN THIS CONTEXT, WALLACH SAID (NOTING THAT HE HIMSELF HAS BEEN EXPOSED TO SO MANY ROMANIAN HUNGARIANS IN PAST FIVE DAYS HE CAN BARELY STAND FURTHER DISCUSSION), AND HE FOUND CEAUSESCU VERY SENSITIVE TO USE OF WORD "ASSIMILATION," WHICH HE ASSOCIATED WITH HUNGARIAN TREATMENT OF TRANSYLVANIAN ROMANIANS IN PRE-1918 AND 1940-1944 PERIOD AND CONSIDERS COMPLETE MISNOMER FOR ROMANIAN POLICY TOWARD ROMANIAN HUNGARIANS NOW. IN ASIDE, WALLACH, NOTED HE FOUND DEPFONMIN GLIGA RECEPTIVE TO HIS PERSONAL SUGGESTION THAT CEAUSESCU HIMSELF VOTANTEER EXPLICATION OF HUNGARIAN MINORITY SITUATION IN TALKS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER.

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